

**Interagency Wildfire Management Team
Meeting Notes
January 25, 2005**

Note: The next IWMT meeting (February 8) will be held at the EOC (TA-69, Building 33) in the Fire TAC Room (124). The IWMT will continue to meet at this location until further notice.

Gene Darling (Emergency Management and Response, LANL) reported that rain and snow are predicted for today. However, the fire conditions are severe for this time of year. Throughout the State of New Mexico 1000-hr fuel moisture are typically below 10 percent and never above 12 percent. At the most recent Zone Board meeting, it was generally agreed that the fire season this year will arrive early and be severe.

Manny L'Esperance (Emergency Management and Response, LANL) reported that fire road maintenance has been progressing well. In addition, hazard trees near the fire roads have been removed. There are also plans to reduce the fire hazards at the firing sites.

Robert "Bill" Gall (NNSA Emergency Manager) announced his retirement effective February 25, 2006. Bill Gentile will be attending future IWMT meetings for NNSA.

Sarah DeMay (Bandelier National Monument) has been coordinating the arrivals of helicopter support and engine crews, which should occur in mid April. Gary Kemp, Marla Rodgers and others are currently attending a regional fire management conference in Albuquerque.

Randy Balice (Ecology Group, LANL) distributed photos of fuels in mountainous areas that were severely burned during the Cerro Grande Fire. The photos were obtained last summer at permanent plots from Apache Springs to Camp May Road. The major fuel components at these sites include seeded grasses, shrubs and fallen trees.

Ros Barnes (ESA Operations and Infrastructure, LANL) is concerned about the fire hazards at ESA. He is currently evaluating the defensible space near buildings and is considering the advantages and disadvantages of evacuation versus shelter-in-place.

The Climate Assessment for the Southwest project (CLIMAS), located at the Institute for the Study of Planet Earth, University of Arizona, reports through its January 2006 Outlook that experts predict the increased chances of warmer-than-average temperatures through July 2006, and below-average precipitation through May of 2006. Drought is expected to persist or intensify over most of the Southwest. For more information, see <http://www.ispe.arizona.edu/climas/forecasts.html>

The next IWMT meeting will be at 9:30 AM on Wednesday, February 8, at the EOC (TA-69, Building 33) in the Fire TAC Room (124). The IWMT meets every other week and these meetings are open to the public. Contact Randy Balice (balice@lanl.gov, 665-1270) for further information, or to get on the distribution list for these meeting notes.

